AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1, and add new claims 8-10, as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A process for producing a rod composed of a transparent plastic via extrusion of a plastic molding composition, wherein the process comprises:

dividing the plastic molding composition into a plastic molding composition 1 and a plastic molding composition 2;

extruding the plastic molding composition 1 as a plastic tube; and

extruding the plastic molding composition 2 as a plastic rod,

wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are discharged from the extruder and then introduced without contact with one another into a vacuum tank calibrator, wherein the plastic rod is heat conditioned in the vacuum tank calibrator so as to achieve dimensional stability, and wherein at about 20 cm after entry into the vacuum tank calibrator the plastic tube is filled in parallel with the plastic rod and fused together.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the rod is composed of an uncolored polymethyl methacrylate having a transmittance of at least τ_{D65} 85%.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plastic molding composition is colored.

Claim 4 (Withdrawn) A round rod, produced by a process as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn) An apparatus for production of round rods, characterized in that an extruded round rod of relatively small diameter in an inner extrusion die in parallel with an extruded tube of relatively large diameter using an outer extrusion die are introduced without contact, after discharge from the extruder, in a calibrator where they fuse to one another after about 20 cm.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn) The apparatus for production of round rods as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that the tube is cooled with stabilization of shape prior to the fusion to the round rod.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn) The method of using round rods in the fitting-out of exhibition stands and of shops, in construction work, in the lighting industry, in the furniture industry, and in advertising technology.

Claim 8 (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are discharged from the extruder and then introduced without contact with one another into the vacuum tank calibrator, wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are heat conditioned in the vacuum tank calibrator so as to achieve dimensional stability, and wherein at about 20 cm after entry into the vacuum tank calibrator the plastic tube is filled in parallel with the plastic rod and fused together.

Claim 9 (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are discharged from the extruder and then introduced without contact with one another into the vacuum tank calibrator, wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are heat conditioned in the vacuum tank calibrator so as to achieve dimensional stability, wherein at

about 20 cm after entry into the vacuum tank calibrator the plastic tube is filled in parallel with the plastic rod and fused together, and wherein the rod is slowly cooled.

Claim 10 (New) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are discharged from the extruder and then introduced without contact with one another into the vacuum tank calibrator, wherein the plastic tube and the plastic rod are heat conditioned in the vacuum tank calibrator so as to achieve dimensional stability, wherein at about 20 cm after entry into the vacuum tank calibrator the plastic tube is filled in parallel with the plastic rod and fused together, wherein the rod is slowly cooled, and wherein the rod exhibits a uniform diameter when measured at a number of different cross-sectional points along the rod.